



NLR Community Garden Committee Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2016, 3:00–4:30 p.m.

Committee members present:

First Presbyterian Church/Argenta Community Garden (Robert Fisher)
Iris Park Community Garden (Judy Cromwell, Fred Cromwell)
NLR City Council (Beth White)
NLR Fit 2 Live (Bernadette Gunn Rhodes, Sara Webb)
NLR Neighborhood Services (Dan Scott)
Pulaski Conservation District (Holly Anderson)
Skyline Community Garden (Diane Barton)
St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Community Garden (Ruth Landers)
St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Hunger Relief Garden (Sandy DeCoursey)
St. Joseph Universal Institute of Theology Community Garden (Michael Merritt)
The Field (Jimmy Parks, Randy DeWitt)

Other individuals present:

Kesha Cobb & Sonya Foster, 4 The Youth Community Garden

Agenda: Discussion & Decisions on Garden Funding

4 The Youth – \$4,559.99 requested

Checklist:

Business License - ?

License Agreement - N

MOU - N

Scores: 89, 100. AVERAGE: 95/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- Need more detail about their outreach and education efforts.
- I don't think 5 volunteers at 400 hours each is realistic.
- Did not say who would pay for the water.
- Requesting \$2,150 for new greenhouse roof.
- The roof should be assessed. Considering the garden did not grow anything this past season and I have never seen anyone at the garden, my guess is that any damage occurred because of lack of care and upkeep.
- \$199 for tiller – No
- Cost for top soil and gravel (\$550 each) - could be lower?
- Business license?
- Signatures needed on assurances page & license agreement.
- We received a final receipt in July 2016. No final progress report has been submitted.

- Per the project's Fall 2014 MOU, final receipts & report were due July 31, 2015. The MOU states: "To receive funding in the next year's funding cycle, funded projects must have completed both 2015 progress reports on time."

DISCUSSION

- Suggestion to approve up to \$2,200.00 for greenhouse repair only, pending a final report from 2014 funding and several quotes for repair by licensed vendors.
- **VOTE:** Judy Cromwell made motion to approve up to \$2,200.00 for greenhouse repair only. Michael Merritt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **UPDATE (12/13/16):** 4 The Youth has decided not to pursue funding at this time. No 2016 funding will be awarded.

Baring Cross Community Garden – \$1,450.00 requested

Checklist:

Business License - Y

License Agreement - N

MOU - N

Scores: 117, 115, 117. AVERAGE: 116/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- Well thought out and realistic.
- Need signature on license agreement.
- Drawing of garden layout and garden rules are on file in Spring 2014 application.
- Attend neighborhood association meetings and Rock the Block/block party events for outreach.
- Very good plan for this garden. I like the idea of being at the Salvation Army; a location that might be familiar and feel secure for the community. A high level of commitment comes through in the application.
- Really liked the Google Earth photo. Other applicants should be encouraged to do that in their applications. Maybe one of the meetings could be used to teach how to do that.
- I'm not sure all the volunteers will want to water by hand - maybe consider sprinklers for the time being?
- Might want to budget for yard debris/compost boxes.
- If people insist on having their own beds, will there be a price?

Response from Beau Cooper: - I don't think sprinklers are a good option. They would require being moved around the garden so that all plants get watered, careful monitoring to make sure plants get watered, and I think they waste a lot of water and can encourage fungal diseases since the leaves get wet.

-We can set debris on the curb for pickup. Also have leftover lumber to build compost bins with, though it might be nice to have some extra money to build/buy some, in case the lumber we have isn't enough or there's a better option. Maybe an extra \$300? -The only people who pay a price are non-residents of the neighborhood, which is \$20/year. Anyone living in the neighborhood doesn't have to pay. Individual plots is not something I will offer or encourage, they'll be more of a last ditch effort to keep or attract gardeners.

DISCUSSION

- Gate is needed for the fence.
- Committee felt that the budget was a bit too low for everything that was needed.
- **VOTE:** Judy Cromwell made motion to fund this project at \$1,750.00. Robert Fisher seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- *UPDATE (12/13/16): Since the property may be sold in the near future, Fit 2 Live decided to hold the funding in house and allow Beau Cooper to spend against it instead of sending a check to the Salvation Army.*

East 2nd Street Community Garden – \$2,065.00 requested

Checklist:

Business License - ?

License Agreement - Y

MOU - N

Scores: 100, 87. AVERAGE: 94/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- The by-laws, garden rules, garden drawing, and w-9 are all found in the 2014 application.
- Goals are great, but need to be measurable.
- I realize Mr. Cox has always managed the garden by himself, but I don't think this is realistic in the long run.
- How will you communicate with other gardens? Will it be at the monthly meetings?
- I'd like to see a mailing done to the neighborhood to recruit more volunteers. Mr. Cox needs back-up.

Response from Pastor Hawkins: Currently I have a potential person that will assist Brother Cox in managing the garden and this will enable more network opportunities within the community. This person will be responsible for attending the monthly meetings and gathering email, phone numbers and staying in contact with those person associated with their respective gardens. In addition, we would hope to establish a better connection with agencies such as: Extension Cooperative Service, plant orchards, etc. During our weekly service we plan to post various pictures, flyers, literature pertaining to volunteer gardening and seeking out anyone that who can volunteer limited time in the garden. Also we hope to reach out to our youth and get them involve in some capacity by introducing the concept of survival to them.

DISCUSSION

- **VOTE:** Robert Fisher made motion to fund this project at \$2,065.00. Judy Cromwell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Presbyterian Church Community Garden – \$3,300.00 requested

Checklist:

Business License - Y
License Agreement - N
MOU - N

Scores: 120, 100, 118. AVERAGE: 113/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- Bylaws and garden rules in 2012 application.
- Signature needed on license agreement.
- Goals were defined and budget items identified well.
- (as a measurable goal) How many more beds to you plan to refurbish with the garden building materials that have been requested? *(16, all remaining beds)*
- What materials are needed to raise the water barrels? Should more money be set aside for that project?
- I think it would be helpful to have bi-monthly meeting with individual-plot owners to discuss issues like composting. Like Ruth, you could have a prize at the end of the season for the person who works the most in the garden. A running list of "things that need to be done" would be helpful for volunteers who want to work but aren't sure what to do.
- Is there a sliding scale for garden beds? *(There is a flat \$25/year fee per bed per year. Members can pay for an extra bed and give it away.)*

DISCUSSION

- Committee suggested adding \$100 to budget for raising the rain barrels.
- **VOTE:** Ruth Landers made motion to fund this project at \$3,400.00. Judy Cromwell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Pike View Community Garden – \$5,000.00 requested

Checklist:

Business License – N/A
MOU with NLRSD – N
MOU - N

Scores: 109, 115, 104. AVERAGE: 109/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- Very thorough proposal. Good support system in place.
- Wonderful application – I will be curious to see how everything shakes out during the first year.
- Education activities are well thought out and well planned.
- Overall seems very organized.
- Questions about the budget: tiller (should not fund) and materials for garden beds (not sure how many they are planning to build, but maybe they should request more \$)
- \$1,500 for storage building - high?
- I only saw a birds-eye view of the garden, but I would like to see any actual drawing that outlines where the beds, compost, and yard debris will go.
- Scanned garden map was hard to read.

- Thought the garden rules should be more detailed since there are so many different groups involved.

Response from Jody Edrington: Metal building question: We just put a metal building at Boone Park last spring and I used the cost for that as my basis. We chose that one because of the durability. We want to have something that cannot be broken into since we will have equipment stored in there.

Cost of beds question: We purchased the raised beds last year with school funds and have allocated additional funds for the garden this year. I tried to streamline the grant funds and purchase large ticket items. That way, when teachers and children design their beds, we can use our school funds to cover those costs.

I will be happy to submit another drawing but can't get it done today. I'm sorry but we are trying to complete Pre-K enrollment.

The Garden Rules are the same rules that were established for the NLRMS Farm. We just revised them for our context. We can certainly develop more detailed rules if needed.

We have a GREAT Partnership with Fellowship North. They are right next door and have been very supportive of our school and program. I am 100% sure this will be a successful partnership and garden.

DISCUSSION

- It was unclear from the application how many raised beds the project proposes and how large they would be. The building material is not in the budget.
- Committee questioned budget for seeds and plants (\$500) and commented that the amount was high, especially since seeds and plant starts are available for free through Fit 2 Live.
- Committee outlined the following suggested budget:
 - \$600 for a shed
 - \$350 for irrigation
 - \$500 for tools
 - \$500 for building materials
 - \$50 for miscellaneous
 - TOTAL: \$2,000.00
- **VOTE:** Robert Fisher made motion to fund this project at \$2,000.00 according to the suggested budget above. Judy Cromwell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Hunger Relief Garden – \$742.00 requested

Checklist:

Business License - Y

License Agreement - Y

MOU - N

Scores: 122, 117, 123. AVERAGE: 121/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- Rules, garden layout, W9 and organizing documents on file from Fall 2015 application.
- Judging by the success this garden had earlier in the spring with the potatoes, I think they are off to a great start. Fund the full amount.
- Established garden with history of success.
- Is the "point person" a volunteer?
- Current business license?

Response from Sandy DeCoursey: Yes, all SJ operations are totally volunteer-run. Sandy also provided a copy of their 2016 business license.

DISCUSSION

- **VOTE:** Judy Cromwell made motion to fund this project at \$742.00. Judy Cromwell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

St. Joseph Universal Inst. of Theology Community Garden – \$4,112.17 requested

Checklist:

Business License - Y

License Agreement - Y

MOU - N

Scores: 56, 90, 71. AVERAGE: 72/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- We need more details about their plans for this coming year. They've just finished their first year of gardening and I would like to see the challenges they've faced reflected in their plan and application.
- Would like to see more of an outreach plan. Additional volunteers are needed. 572 hours/year/volunteer - realistic?
- The amount of volunteer hours is extremely high. If it's that much, they should have the most productive garden in NLR.
- How has this garden engaged the community? That answer [for question #6] cannot be "on file."
- Some questions about the budget: Flowers (~\$200), tree trimmer, weed eater, bricks, misc., rocks, storage building
- The amount request for the storage building (\$2,886) is unrealistically high.
- Concerns about sprinklers walking off? Security?
- How current are garden rules from 2015 application? Are they being put into practice? Need to be revised? For example, how is payment for garden plots handled? The rules list prices.
- Current business license?

Response from Michael Merritt: Need to trim trees before storage building can be installed because falling limbs are damaging garden beds & threaten people working in garden. Calculation of 572 hours is total for the year, not per person. Take out \$200 for flowers (will pay for ourselves). Will provide picture and specs on storage building from Home Depot. Outreach: Spoke to neighborhood church, letter through Neighborhood Services, will attend Meadow Park Neighborhood Meeting. Will create schedule for volunteers for caring for the garden and share it with Fit 2 Live.

DISCUSSION

- The committee recommended to remove from the budget \$100 for rocks and \$258 for a trimmer. The committee also suggested looking at smaller storage sheds, and provided an example of a 10x12' shed available for \$1,500.
- Fit 2 Live noted to contact the Street Department regarding tree trimming.
- **VOTE:** Judy Cromwell made motion to fund this project at \$2,500.00. Holly Anderson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The Field – \$4,980.00 requested

Checklist:

Business License - Y

License Agreement - Y

MOU - N

Scores: 103, 100. AVERAGE: 102/125

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

- I think everything on the budget should be approved, even the chicken feed. Because distributing bee and chicken coop supplies is part of their main garden goal, I think the money is necessary to kick-start that goal. Like Jimmy said in the email, "We don't make enough money from eggs to pay for chicken feed. We have to take it out of what is donated to The One Inc. We're trying to demonstrate that the Field is sustainable...could operate on its own separate budget without dipping into the main homeless outreach budget. We're not there yet. We're trying to use small grants like this...for now...to do it."
- It would be good to see updated garden rules and garden layout since they're talking about expanding and it's been several years since those were submitted.
- W-9 form in 2015 application

DISCUSSION

- The committee advised Jimmy and Randy to follow Plant Board rules regarding keeping and moving bees and registration requirements.
- **VOTE:** Sandy DeCoursey made motion to fund this project at \$4,980.00. Judy Cromwell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4:30 Meeting Adjourned

TOTAL FUNDED: \$ 17,437.00